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ABSTRACT

A national survey was conducted in 1985 of agencies and schools for the blind and visually impaired as well as vocational rehabilitation facilities serving this population. Of the 1453 organizations in the sample, 415 responded; of these responses, 309 were usable. The survey was designed to examine agency characteristics; population characteristics; vocational evaluation processes including goals, methods of data collection, techniques, and instrumentation; and vocational evaluator profiles and training needs. Major findings were: that most clients had additional disabilities with mental retardation, deafness, and emotional/mental illness most frequently indicated; that 80% of persons receiving vocational evaluations were between 13 and 40 years of age; and that evaluators need more training in the area of adapting tests and other assessment devices for use with the visually disabled. (DB)

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Survey of Vocational Evaluation Services for Blind and
Visually Impaired Persons in the United States

Abstract

Based on the recognition of the importance of the vocational evaluation process in providing comprehensive rehabilitation services for persons who are blind and visually impaired, a national survey was completed in 1985 documenting the current "state of the art". Data presented as a result of this survey provides agency profiles; population characteristics; vocational evaluation processes including goals, methods of data collection, techniques, and instrumentation; and, vocational evaluator profiles and training needs. An analysis of the data is presented along with a discussion and implications for further study and training of vocational evaluators.

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Introduction

Vocational evaluation is a critical "point of entry" into the rehabilitation process for many blind and visually impaired persons as they seek to access training and employment options. Since both short and long-range rehabilitation goals are often established based on the results of this evaluation, the need exists to clarify the process and the anticipated outcomes.

Vocational evaluation includes assessment, counseling, and exploration. Real and simulated work are the focal point of this assessment contributing to vocational development.

(V.E.W.A.A.). Vocational Evaluation is a systematic process yielding information on which client and counselor base choices and decisions. Vocational evaluation is a process of assisting individuals to identify interests, skills, and abilities as they relate to work. This is an assessment process not a treatment process. Learning is often a part of this process. Vocational evaluation emphasizes skills evaluation, behavioral observations, aptitude and interest testing utilizing standardized instrumentation, situational assessment, use of work samples, in depth interviewing, and gathering extensive background information (AFB Task Force Minutes, April, 1983).

Vocational evaluation provides information for the client to use in self appraisal and for use in decision making relative to short and long range goals. Through this process the rehabilitation counselor anticipates receiving information about

the client's cognitive and motor aptitudes; interests; specific job related skills; work tolerance; level of career awareness; functional work related literacy skills; job seeking and holding skills, learning style; work related behavior; motivational level; communication skills; socialization skills; orientation and mobility within the work-setting. (AFB Task Force Minutes 6/83).

Needs: In recognition of the need to improve the quality and increase the availability of vocational evaluation services for blind and visually impaired persons, the American Foundation for the Blind initiated a Task Force in April 1983. This Task Force with representative vocational evaluators, university personnel, rehabilitation specialists, agency administrators, and AFB staff focused its expertise and energies on developing objectives and strategies to meet the identified need.

The priority issue identified by this Task Force was the need to document, in a comprehensive, systematic method, the current state of the art regarding:

1. Agency Profiles including sponsorship, type of facility, population served, costs, and length of evaluation.
2. Vocational Evaluation Profiles including goals of the evaluation, methods of data collection, techniques and strategies, staffing, and caseload information.
3. Evaluator's Profiles including educational background, work experiences, in-service training, and perceived training needs.

Based on descriptive information collected through this survey

recommendations have been developed for consideration.

Procedure

Instrument Development: An initial survey questionnaire was developed based on the identified needs with consideration of best practices for survey questionnaire design which would provide quantifiable data. The initial instrument was field-tested with 15 agencies in the Southeast in April 1984 for the purpose of refining both content and design. Based on the feedback a final version of the instrument was completed in October 1984 and reproduced for mailing. The survey questionnaire was divided into four major sections: (1) Agency Profile, (2) Vocational Evaluation Profile, (3) Evaluator Profile, and (4) Training/Experience/Need.

To document vocational evaluation services currently provided by categorical agencies and schools for blind and visually impaired persons and to also compare these to vocational evaluation services available from generic facilities two different sampling procedures were utilized. The categorical sample was selected from schools and facilities listed in the American Foundation for the Blind Directory of Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped in the U.S. 22nd Edition-1984. Based on use of descriptors related to vocational evaluation, vocational training, work adjustment, or placement in describing their services 263 categorical facilities and schools were selected to receive the survey. The generic sample of facilities was selected from the mailing lists of the Materials Development Center of The University

of Wisconsin-Stout. Two separate lists, V.R. Approved Facilities and Other Facilities, were used to select a 25% random sample.

V.R. Approved Facilities include all facilities approved by each State Vocational Rehabilitation Authority to provide vocational evaluation and work adjustment services to clients.

Other Facilities include facilities (and individuals) which may provide vocational evaluation services but do not contract with The State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (i.e. mental health agencies, private consultants, vocational-technical schools).

The following samples were selected.

Table I

CATEGORY	TOTAL N	SAMPLE N
Categorical Facilities for Blind		
and Visually Impaired:	263	263
Generic V.R.Approved Facilities	2428	607
Other Facilities:	<u>2322</u>	<u>583</u>
Totals:	5053	1453

The initial mailing of survey questionnaires occurred in October 1984 with a follow-up mailing to non-respondents in January 1985.

Results

Response Rates: Of 263 Categorical Agencies and Schools surveyed, 125 responded (47.5% response). Of 1190 VR Approved and Other Facilities surveyed, 290 responded (24.5%). Of the total of 1453 agencies and schools surveyed in all three samples, 415 responded (28.5% response rate). Returned as non-deliverable were five (5) Categorical surveys and ninety-nine (99) Generic V.R. Approved and Other Facilities .

Data Analysis:

The data processing and analysis was completed by Botterbusch and Menz of Consultants on Organizational Planning and Processes, Menomonie, Wisconsin, 54751, under contract to the American Foundation for the Blind.

Due to incomplete responses, missing data, or major inconsistencies in the responses 106 of the returned survey questionnaires of the total 415 had to be discarded. Of the remaining 309 surveys used in the data analysis, 83 were Categorical Agencies and Schools f/t Blind and 226 were Combined Generic (V.R. Approved and Other Facilities).

Botterbusch and Menz's analysis of each section involved computation of descriptive statistics for each item; a between group comparison of responses from Blind, Generic and Other Facilities; between groups comparisons of composite levels of perceptions, practices, preferences, needs, experiences and rank-ordering of specific items and/or priority goals, methods, techniques, staffing, and needs. Descriptive statistics included means, medians, standard deviations and range or frequencies for scaled items and percentages for categorical items.

Open-ended responses were listed and manually classified. Subsequently, frequency counts were compiled to identify the most commonly used intelligence tests, vocational interest tests, vocational aptitude tests, achievement tests, manual dexterity tests, commercial work samples, locally developed work samples, situational assessment, and job-site evaluation. Similar classifications were compiled in hopes of identifying major goals, methods, techniques, and needs not covered on the questionnaire. Finally, other open-ended responses relating to populations,

settings, differences in delivery of vocational evaluation to visually impaired clients and on the training experience of evaluators working with visually, impaired persons were also classified.

Agency Profile Information:

Responses (N.309) to type of sponsorship indicate that 56.3% were non-profit private, 38.5% were state operated, and 1.9% were for profit private. This item was not answered on 3.3% of the survey returns. Types of facilities responding were 45% generic, (V.R. Approved), 26.5% Other Facilities, 17.5% Categorical (Blind and Visually Impaired), 9.4% Residential Schools for the Blind, and 1.6% missing data. The Other Facilities category can be generally classified either as (1) Agencies dealing with specific disability groups other than the blind or (2) agencies dealing with essentially normal populations.

The next group of items in this section attempted to define demographically the characteristics and number of clients receiving vocational evaluation services. There were no significant difference in the total number of clients served by the three groups in the most recent fiscal year. Facilities in all three groups provided vocational evaluation services to persons who were classified as multiply handicapped. In fact, there was only a small difference between the mean number of blind clients evaluated and the mean number of multiply handicapped blind persons evaluated. The conclusion one can make is that most blind persons evaluated had an additional severe disability. The most common other handicapping conditions associated with blindness were mental

retardation (32.3%), deafness (21.5%), and emotional/mental illness (10.4%) with other disabilities constituting 35.8%. In summary, the typical blind client reported to be receiving vocational evaluation services was multiply handicapped with a severe secondary disability and between age 13 and 40 years.

Of the Categorical Agencies responding 24.1% indicated they provide a comprehensive vocational evaluation which required an average of 73 hours to complete at an average fee of \$645.00. Of the Generic Facilities, 56.8% offered Vocational Evaluation services also averaging 73 hours to complete but at an average cost of \$389.00. Of other facilities, 25.6% offered a comprehensive vocational evaluation at an average fee of \$452.00 requiring 75.6 hours to complete. One possible reason for this finding is that Categorical (Blindness) Facilities charge more because they specialize in one disability type requiring specialized testing procedures and evaluator expertise.

Vocational Evaluation Profile:

Goals - This section asked the respondents about vocational evaluation goals (i.e., the components commonly included in a comprehensive vocational evaluation). This item listed 14 commonly included specific goals (plus one item for "other" responses), each rated on a five-point scale. In addition, the respondents were asked to select the three most important components.

Table 2 presents the mean frequency ratings, their standard deviations for each sample and the rank of importance for the combined samples. In reviewing Table 2, the reader will note

that the means ranged from 3.2 to 4.7, giving an average rating of between "Sometimes" and "Frequently". Although there may have been statistical significant differences between these values, they were too small to be of any practical use. To complicate matters, 75 other goals were listed (Table 3). Some of these other goals were redundant with the goals presented in Table 2 (e.g., mobility, vocational evaluation), while others were very general (e.g., Work Adjustment). However, frequency of use may or may not be related to the importance attributed to each goal.

In order to discriminate between the importance of the goals, three different data analyses were performed.¹ First, respondents were asked to select the three most important goals; these were ranked in importance by the total number of times that each were listed in Table 2. The five most important goals were as follows: aptitudes, work habits, work skills, interests and work tolerance. These ranks did not appear to be related to the mean ratings for the identical item by the individual samples. The second and third data analyses are reported on Table 4 . The intensity of the ratings was used to discriminate between overall the importance assigned to the goals for the two groups. Thus, an overall significant difference in the mean ratings for all items would indicate a difference in intensity. The mean rating for all 15 goal items for the Generic sample was 4.23; the mean rating for the Other group was 3.96, while the Blind sample had a mean rating of 3.99. These are significantly different to the .01 level.

1. These procedures are repeated throughout this report for all items having rating scales, see the Data Analysis section.

Table 2

Mean Rating of Vocational Evaluation Goals by Facility Type and Importance Rank for Combined Groups

Goal	Importance Rank for Combined Groups	N	Blind Mean	S.D.	N	Generic Mean	S.D.	N	Other Mean	S.D.
Aptitudes	1	63	3.8	1.3	125	4.7	.7	82	4.4	1.1
Work Habits	2	63	4.2	1.2	127	4.7	.6	82	4.3	1.0
Work Skills	3	64	4.2	1.2	127	4.8	.6	82	4.5	1.0
Interests	4	63	4.2	1.2	126	4.6	.7	81	4.5	.8
Work Tolerance	5	64	4.1	1.2	126	4.4	.9	82	4.2	1.2
Socialization	6	64	4.4	.8	127	4.3	.9	81	4.0	1.2
Independent Living	7	61	4.2	1.2	127	3.5	.1	80	3.2	1.4
Physical Capacities	8	64	4.1	1.2	128	4.4	.8	82	4.2	1.1
Personal Reinforcers	9	63	3.8	1.1	125	3.7	1.1	81	3.7	1.3
Learning Style	10	62	3.6	1.3	125	3.8	1.2	82	3.5	1.2
Communication	10	63	4.2	1.0	126	4.4	.8	82	4.2	1.1
Mobility	11	64	4.4	.9	127	4.1	1.1	81	3.9	1.4
Job Seeking Skills	12	62	3.3	1.3	124	3.8	1.0	82	3.2	1.4
Occupational Information	12	64	3.6	1.2	126	3.9	1.0	81	3.6	1.2

Table 3

Other Vocational Evaluation Goals

Goals	N	Percent
Achievement	15	20.00
Work Adjustment	11	14.67
Vocational Evaluation	10	13.33
Personal Adjustment	9	12.00
Employment	8	10.67
Intelligence	7	9.33
Other	5	6.67
Mobility	4	5.33
Activities of Daily Living	3	4.00
Social Interaction	3	4.00
General Total	75	100.00

Table 4

Intensity of Goal Importance and Mean Number of Goals
Selected by Facility Type

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	F
Intensity of Goal Importance				
Blind	64	3.99	.79	4.81**
Generic	128	4.23	.56	
Other	82	3.96	.76	
Mean Number of Goals				
Blind	64	13.81	.75	.54
Generic	128	13.79	1.03	
Other	82	13.91	.42	

** p. = .01

The third data analysis reported the mean number of items selected from the entire list of 15. As reported on Table 4, there was no significant difference between the three groups; all three groups selected almost 14 items.

In reviewing these three tables, several conclusions were made:

- (1) The most important goals when evaluating blind persons were aptitudes, work habits, work skills, interests and work tolerance.
 - (2) The Generic facilities collected data more frequently to meet these goals than the Blind and Other facilities.
 - (3) There was no difference between the number of goals considered important.
- These three conclusions gave the impression that while each of the facility types collected the same kinds of data during evaluation, the Generic facilities collected these data significantly more often than the Other facilities. Beyond this there appeared no differences in facility goals.

Methods of Data Collection - This section of the Vocational Evaluation Profile centered on the "Background information and

reports utilized when completing a comprehensive vocational evaluation..." Eight specific sources were listed with spaces to enter other sources; these were rated on a five point scale from "Never" to "Always." The data analysis procedures used were identical to those used for the Goals section. Table 5 presents the mean frequency rating and the rank of importance for each data collection method.

Table 5
Data Collection Methods: Mean Ratings by Facility Types
and Importance Ranks for Combined Groups

Data Collection Goal	Importance Rank for Combined Groups	N	Blind Mean	S.D.	N	Generic Mean	S.D.	N	Other Mean	S.D.
Psychological	1	61	3.82	1.76	126	4.24	.78	86	4.20	1.03
Work History	2	60	4.20	1.22	126	4.50	.77	87	4.34	.99
Medical	3	62	4.64	.94	126	4.66	.71	86	4.29	1.08
Educational	4	62	3.39	1.30	126	3.71	1.00	87	4.08	.93
Socio/Economic	5	60	3.58	1.25	126	3.67	1.03	86	3.51	1.17
Orientation	6	61	4.41	.92	127	3.76	1.12	87	3.61	1.20
Adaptive Skills	7	60	3.85	1.20	122	3.55	1.06	82	3.54	1.16
Social Service	8	62	3.82	1.22	126	3.91	1.00	86	3.86	1.23

The means ranged from 3.39 ("Sometimes") to 4.66 ("Frequently"); this range was too small to have any practical significance. The items were ranked by the same methods described in the Goals section; the most important items were: psychological, work history and medical reports. In addition to these responses, there were 68 "other" methods of data collection (Table 6). A close look at Table 6 indicated that some respondents misinterpreted the question. For example, ten persons listed medical reports/tests and 9 listed psychological reports/tests, items already included in the first part of the question. It was interesting to note, however, that many used reports from other agencies. Finally, many included what are definitely not information obtainable from other agencies (e.g., intake interview, observation, and testing/work samples/situational assessment). Table 7 indicates that there were no significant differences in either intensity or mean number of data collection methods. Thus, the agencies in all three samples used the same data collection methods and used them with the same degree of intensity.

Table 6

Other Vocational Evaluation Data Collection Methods		
Method	N	Percent
Other	14	20.59
Testing/Work Samples/	13	19.12
Medical Reports/Tests	10	14.71
Psychological Reports/	9	13.34
Tests		
Intake Interview	9	13.24
Reports from Other	7	10.29
Agencies		
Case History	4	5.88
Situation Assessment		
Observation	2	2.94
Total	68	100.01

Table 7

Intensity of Needs and Mean Number of Data Collection Methods
by Facility Type

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	F
Intensity of Needs				
Blind	62	3.97	.71	.26
Generic	127	4.00	.57	
Other	87	3.94	.71	
Mean Number				
Blind	62	7.87	.46	.15
Generic	127	7.91	.56	
Other	87	7.90	.40	

In summary, the results indicated that many vocational evaluators frequently used a wide variety of documents as background information, the most important being psychological reports, work history and medical reports. There were no significant differences between the samples on the importance assigned to these methods or number of data collection methods used.

Techniques and Strategies - This section, the heart of the questionnaire, asked the specific tools and methods used to evaluate visually disabled clients: interview, intelligence tests, aptitude tests, achievement tests, dexterity tests, commercial work samples, locally developed work samples, situational assessment and job site assessment (Table 8). Within most of the categories the respondents wrote in the three most useful assessment devices which varied from highly structured standardized vocational evaluation systems to locally developed work samples.

Table 8

Vocational Evaluation Techniques and Strategies: Mean Ratings by Facility Types and Importance Ranks for Combined Groups

Techniques and Strategies	Importance Rank for Combined Groups	N	Blind Mean	S.D.	N	Generic Mean	S.D.	N	Other Mean	S.D.
Situational Assessment	1	54	3.61	1.35	123	4.09	1.21	79	3.68	1.49
Commercial Work Samples	2	47	2.94	1.74	116	4.31	1.13	72	3.43	1.60
Interviews	3	59	4.64	1.08	126	4.87	.33	80	4.81	.33
Interest Tests	4	47	3.74	1.31	105	4.42	.79	74	4.19	1.15
Achievement Tests	5	51	3.20	1.67	115	3.87	1.31	82	3.38	1.66
Aptitude Tests	6	43	3.14	1.63	94	4.17	1.13	66	3.91	1.37
Job Site Assessment	7	48	2.44	1.41	108	2.26	1.38	71	2.21	1.42
Local Work Samples	8	48	3.46	1.53	99	3.12	1.63	64	2.91	1.63
Manual Dexterity Tests	9	51	3.65	1.47	113	4.25	1.13	77	3.67	1.51
Intelligence Tests	10	51	3.53	1.50	115	3.82	1.22	74	3.34	1.45

Table 8 contains the mean frequency rating, their standard deviation and the rank of each technique, using procedures described above. The most commonly used was the interview (means of 4.64, 4.87, and 4.81); the least was job site assessment (means of 2.44, 2.26, and 2.21). The five most important techniques were: situational assessment, commercial work samples, interviews, interest tests, manual dexterity tests and achievement tests. These rankings and the frequency ratings indicated that at least with blind persons, evaluators used a wide variety of techniques.

The response intensities and the mean methods are presented in Table 9 . The significant difference between the Generic and Blind (M = 3.98, S.D. = .61; M= 3.97, S.D. = .71) and the Other group indicated that the first two groups used the evaluation techniques more often than did the Other facilities (M = 3.58; S.D. = .71). There was no significant difference in the number of methods used. The implications are that the Generic and Blind facilities used the evaluation techniques listed on the questionnaire more frequently than Other facilities; yet both groups used a wide variety of methods.

Table 9

**Intensity of Needs and Mean Number of Techniques and Strategies
by Facility Type**

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	F
Intensity of Needs				
Blind	62	3.97	.71	10.79 **
Generic	127	3.98	.61	
Other	85	3.58	.71	
Mean Number				
Blind	61	8.18	2.57	1.77
Generic	127	8.77	1.81	
Other	85	8.61	2.08	

** p = .01

The rest of this important section focuses on the most commonly used tests, work samples, and other types of assessment. The second Techniques and Strategies item asked for the three most commonly used intelligence tests. Table 10 presents these results; there were few surprises. The tests on Table 10 are commonly used intelligence tests, most of which have proven useful in assessing a wide variety of both normal and disabled populations. Over 40% used one or more of the various forms of the WAIS, and another 9% used the WISC. Other commonly used tests were the Progressive Matrices, the Slossen and the Beta Tests. Since the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) is an achievement test, it was troubling to find that slightly over 4% of the samples used this test as a measure of intelligence. The same concern was expressed for the use of work samples.

Table 10
Commonly Used Intelligence Tests-Combined Data

Test Name	N	Percent
Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (original or revised)	118	40.97
Other Tests	40	13.89
Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (original or revised)	26	9.03
Progressive Matrices (Raven)	18	6.25
Slosson Intelligence Test	18	6.25
Wide Range Achievement Test	12	4.17
Work Samples	11	3.82
Peabody Individual Achievement Test	9	3.73
Beta, Beta II & Revised Beta	9	3.12
Haptic Intelligence Scalle for Adult Blind	8	2.78
Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test	8	2.78
Other Methods	7	2.43
Interview/Subjective Assessment	2	.69
Total	288	99.99

Table 11 contains commonly used interest measures. The most commonly used interest inventory was the Wide Range Interest Opinion Test (WRIOT) with 22.44%; the next was various forms of the Kuder (12.19%), the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory (11.63%), and AAMD-Becker (10.53). The WRIOT and the AAMD-Becker are picture interest inventories, the first is designed for a normal population and the second is aimed at mentally retarded persons. The Kuder and the SCII, as do most of the other interest inventories listed on Table 11, require enough vision to read fairly small print.

Table 11
Commonly Used Interest Tests - Combined Data

Test Name	N	Percent
Wide Range Interest Opinion Test	81	22.44
Kuder (Various Forms)	44	12.19
Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory	42	11.63
AAMD-Becker Reading Free Vocational Interest Inventory	38	10.53
Other Tests	33	9.14
COPSystem Interest Inventory	24	6.65
Other Work Samples	15	4.16
Gordon Occupational Checklist	12	3.33
Career Assessment Inventory	12	3.32
Career Occupational Assessment System	11	3.05
Self-Directed Search	11	3.05
Geist Picture Interest Inventory	10	2.77
Harrington-O'shea Career Decision-Making System	8	2.22
Various DOT Based Systems	7	1.94
Other Methods (e.g. Case records & Interview)	5	1.38
Micro-Computer Evaluation and Assessment System (MESA)	4	1.11
Valpar	4	1.11
Total	361	100.02

The most useful aptitude tests are given on Table 12. Once again, all of the responses were commonly used tests or work sample. It is, perhaps worthy of note, that many respondents wrote in the names of work samples (e.g., JEVS = 2.52%; Valpar = 11.15%); in fact, the percentage of work sample usage was higher than most tests. This seems to indicate that many evaluators used a variety of work samples as aptitude tests. The most commonly administered test was the General Aptitude Test Battery (17.27%). The rest of the tests on this table were a combination of multiple aptitude batteries and specific aptitudes measures.

Table 12
Commonly Used Aptitude Tests - Combined Data

Test Name	N	Percent
Other Tests	79	28.42
General Aptitude Test Battery	48	17.27
Valpar	31	11.15
Other Work Samples	23	8.27
SRA Tests (i.e., clerical, reading, math)	18	6.47
Differential Aptitude Test	16	5.75
Career Ability Placement Survey	11	3.96
McCarron-Dial Work Evaluation System	11	3.96
Bennett Mechanical Comprehensive Test	10	3.60
Minnesota Clerical Test	9	3.24
Revised Minnesota Paper Form Board Test	8	2.88
Wide Range Achievement Test	7	2.51
JEVS Work Sample System	7	2.52
General Clerical Test	5	1.80
Micro-Computer Evaluation and Assessment System (MESA)	5	1.80
Total	278	100.00

Item 5 under Strategies and Techniques asked for the three most useful achievement tests (Table 13). The data reported indicated the use of readily available, commonly used achievement tests. The WRAT was by far the most common used test (42.14%), followed by the Peabody Individual Achievement Test (9.03%), Gates-MacGinite Reading Test (6.35%) and the Adult Basic Learning Examination (6.02%). Together these four tests accounted for almost 65% of the responses. The Peabody is individually administered with the test examiner marking the responses; the other three tests are group administered requiring reading skills and the ability to use a separate answer sheet.

Table 13

Commonly Used Achievement Tests - Combined Data

Test Name	N	Percent
Wide Range Achievement Test	126	42.14
Other Tests	57	19.06
Peabody Individual Achievement Test	27	9.03
Gates-MacGinite Reading Test	19	6.35
Adult Basic Learning Examination	18	6.02
Stanford Achievement Tests	11	3.60
Work Samples	8	2.68
SRA Reading and Mathematics Tests	6	2.01
TABE	6	2.01
California Achievement Test	5	1.68
Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests	5	1.67
Nelson-Denny Reading Test	4	1.34
Scholastic Achievement Test	4	1.34
Iowa Tests of Basic Skills	3	1.00
Total	299	99.93

The most useful manual dexterity tests are presented on Table 14 . As with several other tables, the assessment of dexterity included a combination of tests and work samples. The two most useful tests were the Crawford Small Parts Dexterity Test (19.67%) and the Bennett Hand-Tool Dexterity Test (12.97%). Other tests included the Pennsylvania Bi-Manual Work Sample and the MROM (10.88%). The two most useful work samples were the Valpar (13.81%) and the McCarron-Dial Work Evaluation System (3.77%).

Table 14

Commonly Used Manual Dexterity Tests - Combined Data

Test Name	N	Percent
Crawford Small Parts Dexterity Test	47	19.67
Valpar ~~34.74~~	33	13.81
Bennett Hand-Tool Dexterity Test	31	12.97
MROM	26	10.88
Pennsylvania Bi-Manual Work Sample	23	9.62
Other Tests	22	9.21
General Aptitude Test Battery	12	5.02
Other Work Samples	13	5.44
McCarron-Dial Work Evaluation System	9	3.77
JEVS Work Sample System	7	2.93
Purdue Pegboard	7	2.93
Minnesota Rate of Manipulation Test	6	2.51
Other Methods (e.g. Situational)	3	1.26
Total	239	100.02

The next item asked for the three most commonly used commercial work sample systems (Table 15). Respondents reported using a variety of commonly available vocational evaluation systems. The Valpar with 42.98% was by far the most popular; this was most likely due to the fact that Valpar work sample numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, and 10 can be modified for visually disabled persons

(Botterbusch, 1982). The JEVS was a distant second with 13.40%, and Singer was third (7.90%). These choices were interesting because each of the three work sample systems emphasizes a different aspect. In addition to modifications for visually disabled persons, Valpar stresses ease of administration and scoring; JEVS requires close evaluator contact and client feedback. Unlike the other two, Singer uses an audio-visual format to provide occupational information and very detailed instructions. It should also be noted that the newer computerized work samples, such as Apticon and Career Evaluation systems, were either not mentioned at all or were only considered useful by a very small percentage of respondents.

Table 15

Commonly Used Commercial Work Samples - Combined Data

System Name	N	Percent
Valpar	125	42.96
JEVS Work Sample System	39	13.40
Other Work Samples	38	13.06
(Singer) Vocational Evaluation System	23	7.90
Vocational Information and Evaluation Work Samples	18	6.19
McCarron-Dial Work Evaluation System	15	5.15
TOWER	10	3.44
Talent Assessment Program	7	2.41
Micro-Computer Evaluation and Assessment System (MESA)	6	2.06
Micro-TOWER	5	1.72
SAVE	5	1.72
Total	291	100.01

The respondents also found 150 locally developed work samples to be useful (Table 16). The responses to this item were classified into general occupational areas. No attempt was made to identify individual work samples. The most useful of these work samples were assembly/collating (36.00%), followed by food service (33.00%), clerical (14.67%) and packaging/sorting (14.67%). These work samples appear to reflect the common types of entry level jobs in which many disabled persons are placed and/or the type of subcontract work found in a rehabilitation facility. To repeat what was stated several times above, these results give an indication that no group evaluated visually disabled persons much differently than other types of disabled clients.

Table 16

Commonly Used Locally Developed Work Samples - Combined Data

Work Sample Name	N	Percent
Assembly/Collating	54	36.00
Food Service	31	33.00
Packaging/Sorting	22	14.67
Clerical	22	14.67
Mechanical (e.g. cars, small engine)	17	11.33
Retail Trade/Cashier	12	8.00
Other	10	6.67
Construction	5	3.33
Measuring	4	2.67
Greenhouse	2	1.33
Total	150	100.00

The next to the last item in this group asked about useful situational assessments (Table 17). The reader will recall that situational assessment was ranked as the most useful vocational evaluation method in Table 8. Of the 152 responses, slightly over one-third were classified as Assembly/Contracts/Subcontracts/Packaging (34.21%); the next largest group was clerical (14.46%), followed by custodial/maintenance (7.89%). Reading over these results raises several interesting comparisons. There were almost as many Assembly/collating work samples (36.00%) used as there were Assembly/Collating/Sub-contracts/Packaging situational assessments (34.21%). A similar condition existed between the Clerical work samples (14.67%) and the Clerical situational assessment (14.47%). Finally, the number of responses for the two items were almost identical (i.e., N = 150; N = 152). Based on these similarities, it is possible that many evaluators were not able to discriminate between "homemade" work samples and situational assessments.

Table 17

Commonly Used Situational Assessments - Combined Data

Assessment Name	N	Percent
Assembly/Contracts/Subcontracts/Packaging	52	34.21
Other	31	20.40
Clerical	22	14.47
Work Adjustment	18	11.84
Custodial/Maintenance	12	7.89
Classroom	6	3.95
Cafeteria/Food Service	3	1.97
Landscaping/Outside Work	2	1.32
Laundry	2	1.32
Total	152	100.00

The final item asked for the most useful job site evaluations (Table 18). The 116 total responses to this item, as compared with the total number of responses to the other evaluation technique items, indicated that job site evaluation did not play a very large part in client assessment. In view of the recent trend toward supported work and transitional employment, this was a disappointing finding. This finding may have changed somewhat since the data was gathered. As would be expected, the kinds of job sites appeared to reflect the common entry level jobs often available to disabled persons: food service (20.68%), industrial/assembly (12.07%), janitorial/maintenance (8.62%), and child care/nursing (6.90%).

Table 18

Commonly Used Job Site Assessments - Combined Data

Job Site Name	N	Percent
Food Service	24	20.68
Other	23	19.83
Industrial/Assembly	14	12.07
Janitorial/Maintenance	10	8.62
Child Care/Nursing	8	6.90
Office/Clerical	7	6.03
Sheltered Employment	6	5.17
Hotel/Motel	4	3.45
Hospital	5	4.31
Grounds/Outside	5	4.31
Government	4	3.45
Day Care	3	2.59
Retail Sales	3	2.59
Total	116	100.01

This section presented the techniques and strategies used in the evaluation of blind persons. Evaluators administered the same tests, work samples, situational assessments and job site evaluations commonly given to other disability groups. At this point, it was the authors' impression that any differences are those of degree and not in the use of different or unique tools and techniques.

Staffing - The next section dealt with staffing patterns, in particular, the item asked from what person(s) did the facility receive input. Note that this item does not ask if the person(s) was specifically present during client staffing; it only asks if a person(s) has provided input during the vocational evaluation process. Table 19 presents the mean contribution of others by group and the ranked importance of each person listed on that table. An examination of the means indicated that the Blind sample used four professional occupations commonly associated with training and education of visually disabled persons: mobility instructor, rehabilitation teacher, classroom teacher and low vision specialist. The rank of importance was determined using the same methods described in the Goal section. The highest four were the client, vocational evaluator, rehabilitation counselor and the parents/family. Unlike other tables using the same methods, the rank of importance corresponds to the mean rating.

Table 20 presents other persons who provided information during evaluation. The most common (36.4 %) were other professionals (i.e. physical and occupational therapists), next at 25.5% were

floor supervisors (i.e., workshop foreman) and at 11% house-parents/group living staff.

Table 19
Contributions of Other Persons to the Vocational
Evaluation Process: Mean Ratings by Facility Types
and Importance Ranks for Combined Groups

Contributions of Others	Importance Rank for Combined Groups	N	Blind Mean	S.D.	N	Generic Mean	S.D.	N	Other Mean	S.D.
Client	1	57	4.53	.99	125	4.89	.39	84	4.77	.52
Evaluator	2	54	4.17	1.18	125	4.79	.56	81	4.48	.99
Rehabilitation Counselor	3	55	4.16	1.15	125	4.13	1.20	79	3.76	1.31
Parents/Family	4	57	3.07	1.00	124	3.51	1.05	81	3.52	1.05
Psychologist	5	57	3.35	1.20	119	3.35	1.28	81	3.35	1.26
Medical Consultants	5	56	3.25	1.28	122	3.26	1.24	82	3.08	1.36
Social Worker	6	53	3.25	1.43	119	2.95	1.18	79	2.98	1.25
Classroom Teacher	7	54	3.28	1.42	117	2.83	1.41	75	2.97	2.97
Mobility Instructor	8	56	4.20	.94	117	2.43	1.36	74	2.27	1.39
Rehabilitation Teacher	9	55	3.69	1.25	115	2.54	1.47	72	2.35	1.39
Low Vision Specialist	10	55	3.47	2.29	106	2.40	1.38	69	2.20	1.48

Table 20
Contributions of "Others" to the Vocational Evaluation Process

Other Person	N	Percent
Other Professionals	20	36.36
Floor Supervisor	14	25.45
Others	8	14.54
Houseparents/Group Living Staff	6	10.91
"Counselors"	3	5.45
Instructional Staff	2	3.64
Employers	2	3.64
Total	55	99.99

As with other identical formatted items, the mean number of responses (i.e., the average number of persons contributing) and the mean intensity rating (i.e., the average frequency rating) were determined (Table 21). There was a significant difference at the .05 level in the intensity of the ratings. The Blind samples used the contributions of "others" significantly more than did the Generic and Other samples. However, there was no significant difference between the three groups in the average number of "others" contributing.

Table 21

Intensity of Needs and Mean Number of Persons Contributing to Vocational Evaluation by Facility Type

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	F
Intensity of Needs				
Blind	57	3.67	.63	3.68*
Generic	126	3.44	.73	
Other	84	3.34	.71	
Mean Number				
Blind	55	10.67	.76	2.19
Generic	126	10.43	1.50	
Other	84	10.20	1.78	

* p = .05

In summary, the three samples indicated that they received evaluation input from a variety of sources: the client, vocational evaluator, rehabilitation counselor and psychologist. The Blind sample used outside sources of information more than the other two groups did; most likely, this significant difference was attributable to the greater use of mobility instructors, rehabilitation teachers, classroom teachers, and low vision specialists.

Caseload Information - The last section of the Vocational Evaluation Profile requested information on caseload. Table 22 gives the results for Item 1 "Average number of clients..caseload.." Because there were no significant differences ($F=.03$) between the three groups on this item, it can be concluded that the client/evaluator ratio for all facilities in the study was slightly over 8:1. Note, this does not indicate the number of clients being evaluated at a specified time rather those on the caseload. The next item asked if vocational evaluation differed for visually disabled persons and non-visually disabled persons. A 2x2 Chi square yielded an overall significant difference for all groups ($X=8.19$; $df=1$; $p<.01$). In the Item 3, respondents were asked to "give a brief description of how vocational evaluation of visually impaired clients differs." The summarized and classified responses are given on Table 23; responses would be classified into two major groups: the first, and most common changes, concerned adapting tests, work samples, and other equipment. Closely related to this was the increased use of oral and audio techniques. The second set of changes were changes in the evaluation process: greater use of situational and job site assessments, more individual attention and inclusion of mobility assessment.

Table 22

Mean Number of Clients in Caseload by Facility Type

Facility Type	N	Mean	S.D.	F
Blind	43	8.00	13.36	.03
Generic	137	8.38	7.04	
Other	72	8.36	7.95	
Total	234	8.30	8.75	

Table 23

Differences in Vocational Evaluation Between Visually Disabled Clients and Clients with other Disabilities

Type of Difference	N	Percent
Adaptation of Other Equipment	31	22.79
Adaptation of Tests	28	20.59
Other	22	16.18
Adaptation of Work Samples	18	13.24
More Individual Attention	13	9.56
Increased use of Oral/Audio Techniques	12	8.82
Include Mobility Assessment	4	2.94
Greater Use of Situational Assessment	4	2.94
Greater Use of Job Site Assessment	4	2.94
Total	136	100.00

In summary, the Vocational Evaluation Profile was very similar for the three samples. The only statistical differences reported in this section were: (1) the intensity of the evaluation goals (Table 4), (2) the intensity of the number of evaluation techniques (Table 9) and (3) the intensity in the persons contributing to the evaluation process. However, these significant differences in intensity were not consistent. The Generic sample had the highest values in the goals and techniques sections; the Blind group had the highest mean values in the staffing section. There were no differences in intensity of data collection methods. There were no significant differences in the number of choices made on any item group. The general conclusion is that all facilities pursued similar goals, used similar methods and techniques, and had similar contributions from others when evaluating visually disabled persons. However, the Generic agencies used these same goals and evaluation techniques more often than did the Blind or the Other agencies. Blind agencies used a significantly greater degree of input from other persons during evaluation. Finally, although there was a significant difference between the evaluation practices for blind persons when compared to other disabilities, these differences were limited to instrument and program modification.

EVALUATOR PROFILE:

Educational Background and Work Experiences

This section sought to describe the educational background, years of experience as a vocational evaluator, years of experience working with blind or visually impaired persons, and other work experiences. Of the total combined sample of 309 respondents, 175 responded yes to having a bachelor's degree with the two most prominent areas being education (23%) and social sciences (45%). The largest single degree category was psychology with 28.6%. Only about 10% indicated the bachelor's degrees in rehabilitation or vocational rehabilitation areas. A total of 154 respondents also reported having a master's degree with the highest percentages in rehabilitation counseling (15.6%), counseling (12.3%), vocational evaluation/work adjustment (12.3%) and rehabilitation (11.9%). Respondents indicated an average of 4.2 years full-time work experience as a vocational evaluator. Respondents from categorical (Blindness) agencies averaged 10.6 years of experience in working in programs for blind and visually impaired persons. The highest percentage (26.9%) of respondents indicated that teachers was their primary other Work Experience.

Training, Experience, and Perceived Needs

The purpose of this section was to determine what training evaluators had in specific competencies, what experience (defined as one year), and what training was needed. Unlike many other items, there was no rating scale for this section; respondents checked all relevant items. Therefore, all responses to individual items were given in terms of percentages. Table 24 contains the percentage of "yes" responses for category by each group and the overall rank of importance assigned to the category. The most pressing need was for training in administering intelligence tests, interpreting results and report writing, use of commercial work samples, work sample development and systematic behavior observation, all of which are basic competencies of evaluators (Coffey, 1978; Greenstein, 1984).

Percentage of "Yes" Responses for Training, Experience, and
Need by Facility Type and Rank of Importance for
Combined Groups

Item	Importance Rank for Combined Groups	Training	Experience	Need
Intelligence Tests Administration, Scoring	1			
Blind		.30	.29	.18
Generic		.49	.43	.26
Other		.58	.33	.19
Interpretation of Vocational Assessment and Report Writing	2			
Blind		.32	.48	.11
Generic		.58	.81	.76
Other		.48	.68	.90
Commercial Work Samples Utilization	3			
Blind		.30	.29	.19
Generic		.54	.68	.14
Other		.44	.53	.16
Work Sample Development	4			
Blind		.30	.42	.20
Generic		.46	.53	.25
Other		.38	.51	.21
Systematic Behavioral Observation	5			
Blind		.28	.49	.88
Generic		.56	.75	.11
Other		.41	.63	.81
Counseling Techniques	6			
Blind		.43	.44	.13
Generic		.69	.70	.14
Other		.57	.67	.90
Job Analysis Techniques	7			
Blind		.33	.35	.16
Generic		.54	.56	.20
Other		.56	.38	.16
Materials Adaptation for Use With Visually Impaired	8			
Blind		.25	.49	.15
Generic		.22	.34	.64
Other		.14	.21	.57
Aptitude Tests Administration/Scoring	9			
Blind		.34	.30	.14
Generic		.58	.67	.11
Other		.61	.55	.91
Achievement Tests Administration/Scoring	10			
Blind		.32	.33	.13
Generic		.53	.67	.11
Other		.54	.52	.14
Career Exploration Strategies	11			
Blind		.36	.43	.18
Generic		.45	.66	.27
Other		.57	.57	.11
Dexterity Tests Administration/Scoring	12			
Blind		.29	.42	.13
Generic		.54	.74	.61
Other		.53	.56	.90

Table 25
Mean Number of Responses for Training, Experience and Need
by Facility Type

Response Group	N	Mean	S.D.	F.
Training				
Blind	79	4.23	3.91	7.55 **
Generic	131	6.32	3.96	
Other	99	6.05	3.92	
Experience				
Blind	79	5.14	4.15	11.42**
Generic	131	7.67	3.47	
Other	99	6.40	3.85	
Need				
Blind	79	2.32	2.13	.78
Generic	131	2.59	2.33	
Other	99	2.27	1.78	

** p. = .01

The data on Table 24 were much easier to interpret with the summary statistics given on Table 25. The mean number of responses (i.e., the average number of items checked) for each group were compared using a one-way analysis of variance for Training, Experience, and Need. The three groups gave significant different responses for Training and Experience. The Generic and Other agencies reported an average of over six areas where they considered themselves to be trained; the Blind agencies had training in only four areas. Blind agencies ($M = 5.14$) had significant less experience than did the Generic ($M = 7.67$) and Other ($M = 6.40$) agencies. This meant that vocational evaluators working in Blind agencies had significantly less experience in some aspects of vocational evaluation than their colleagues in Generic and Other agencies. The final area of Table 24 dealt with Need. There were no significant differences between the three groups in terms of training needs. It is interesting to note that the mean number of training needs were between two and three for all groups.

Some interesting implications can be drawn from Table 24. Although the Blind agencies had less training and less experience than did their counterparts in Generic and Other agencies, evaluators in Blind agencies reported no significant greater training needs. Thus, it appeared that the evaluators from Blind agencies, while in having less training and experience, considered themselves as not needing training.

Discussion

The problem, of course, after presenting the data analysis is to interpret these results in a meaningful and consistent fashion.

This discussion will focus on the similarities and differences of the three groups.

Similarities

In many respects evaluators employed in Blind, Generic and Other facilities were very much alike. All three groups consisted mostly of persons employed in a non-profit situation: either in a state operated facility or in a traditional non-profit vocational rehabilitation facility. These large standard deviations are interpreted as meaning that all three samples consisted of small or large facilities, resulting in a bi-modal distribution. Most of the blind persons served had another, often severe disability. The age of the clients did not differ significantly -- all three samples provided most of their evaluation services to persons between 13 and 40. The conclusion that can be made from these data was that there were most likely no practical differences between the blind clients served by each group, whether in large numbers or small.

The first part of the Vocational Evaluation Profile presented 14 attributes (or goals) that are commonly assessed during vocational evaluation. There was no significant difference in the mean number of goals selected; each group assessed for an average of over 13 attributes of the 15 choices. The implication is that regardless of agency, evaluators routinely assess visually disabled persons for the same attributes: interests, aptitudes, work skills, work habits, independent living skills, learning style, occupation information, interpersonal skills, physical capacities, personal reinforcers, work tolerance, mobility, communication skills and job seeking skills. In conclusion, all evaluators in

the sample assessed the same attributes. The rank of importance of each set of items was determined by totaling the number of the responses to attributes to be assessed were: aptitudes, work habits, work skills, interests and work tolerances.

With the possible exception of interests, these five are the very basic attributes that must be assessed in every client. It appears that most evaluators were providing a basic service with little extras.

In the data collection methods item, evaluators in all three groups checked an average of over seven items (eight alternatives); there was also no significant difference between the three groups in intensity. That is, no one sample rated the frequency of use differently from the others. The rating for the three groups was four or "Frequently". This is a strong indication that all evaluators used a wide variety of reports and information when compiling the evaluation report. Based on the authors experience, this practice of using other sources of information is, and should be, very common practice among evaluators. The use of other sources of information has several advantages: (1) it prevents duplication of efforts, (2) it provides the evaluator with background information useful in planning the evaluation, (3) it may suggest problem areas or hidden strengths not mentioned in the referral questions, and (4) certain types of information, such as medical, psychological and educational set the parameters for the evaluation. The three most important sources of information were: psychological reports, work history, and medical reports. It is

easy to see why these were ranked as very important; these reports would form the framework on which the evaluator plans his/her assessment strategy. In summary, all evaluators used a wide variety of information sources and all used these sources in the same degree.

The next section dealt with the "techniques and strategies" used to conduct an evaluation. There were ten alternatives to be selected and rated for intensity. The respondents also entered the most commonly used tests, work samples, etc. Of the ten possible alternatives, all three groups used an average of over eight methods; the five most used were: situational assessment, commercial work samples, interview, interest tests and achievement tests. A careful review of the commonly used instruments and techniques lead to two conclusions: (1) For the most part the tests, work samples, etc. administered to visually disabled clients were no different than those administered to other disabled populations. (2) Most of the instruments listed were common, standardized tests and work samples that are commonly found in almost every evaluation unit. The single most lasting impression obtained from the data in this section was that in evaluating blind persons evaluators use mostly standardized, well accepted, tests and work samples.

The staffing items asked how many persons contributed information during the course of evaluation. This item differs from the methods item in the following way: The methods items ask about information supplied before the evaluation starts: the

staffing items implies a contribution during the evaluation and staffing processes. Of the 12 possible responses, all three groups indicated that they used an average of over ten persons. The most important contributions came from: client, vocational evaluator, rehabilitation counselor, parents/family and psychologist. As with the methods item above, vocational evaluators commonly use a wide variety of informational sources during the evaluation period. This use is a widely accepted practice and needs to be encouraged. Finally, evaluation practices differed between blind and non-blind clients; each sample reported that the adaptation of tests, work samples and other equipment were the most common differences.

The evaluator profile items provide us with a composite picture of the evaluators in the sample; how well these results can be generalized is a matter for speculation. The most disturbing finding dealt with the educational level of evaluators. Out of 309 responses, 175 had at least a bachelors degree; 154 have a masters. Assuming the correct responses from the samples, the implication is that while a large group of evaluators have college training, an almost equally large group lack a college background. This is most disturbing in a profession where a masters degree is the desired norm. This split on education has serious ramifications for short term and in-service training of evaluators.

The final set of items asked about training, experience and need. Of the twelve defined items and two "other" items, evaluators

reported the same training needs, an average of slightly over two needs. Therefore, according to this data evaluators do not believe that they need much in the way of training. Administering intelligence tests, interpreting results, use of commercial work samples, and work sample development were the most common. This finding appears to be inconsistent with the serious split in formal education.

Differences

Four significant differences were reported: in the amount charged for a comprehensive evaluation, the intensity of goals, the intensity of techniques and strategies, intensity of persons contributing to the evaluation process, the mean number of responses for training, and the mean number of responses for experience.

Although all groups averaged between 69 and 73 hours for a comprehensive evaluation, the Blind sample charged significantly more. It is possible that this is due to the smaller caseload carried by this sample during evaluation or to the appearance that blind persons require different evaluation techniques.

The next several significant differences were on the intensity of the responses. Generic facilities commonly evaluated for specific attributes (i.e., goals) than did either the Blind or Other groups. Blind and Generic agencies used evaluation techniques and strategies more frequently than did the Other facilities. Blind agencies obtained input with more intensity than did the Generic and Other facilities.

The intensity analyses dealt with the frequency with which data were collected or used, as compared with the mean use pattern. It is one thing to use a technique or source of information and another to use it frequently. Another separate issue is to decide if a significant statistical difference is considered important enough to build a training program around, especially when none of the evaluators felt an intense need for training. The problem, then, becomes one of determining if there are any consistencies or patterns in these significant differences. The mean number of responses for training and experience is the only consistent finding. It appears that the Blind sample had significantly less training and experience in all twelve items listed. Yet, the three samples saw themselves as needing training in a very few areas: administering intelligence tests, interpretation of results, use of commercial work samples, work sample development, and systematic behavioral observation. Another difference was concerned with different types of evaluation for blind and other disability groups. Evaluators used significantly different processes when assessing a blind person; they used commonly available assessment techniques, many of which were adapted and gave more individual attention to the client who was blind or visually impaired.

The impression obtained for reviewing the differences is while the three samples did not differ in number of goals, methods of data collection, techniques and strategies and staffing, there were differences in the frequency with which some actions were carried out.

Summary and Training Considerations

As was expected the majority (94.8%) of agencies and schools responding to the survey were either state operated or non-profit private. Three agencies groups were sampled with resulting usable responses as follows: (1) Categorical Facilities for the blind and visually impaired, consisting of 39 residential schools and 54 rehabilitation centers, sheltered workshops and evaluation units, a total of 83 useable responses; (2) Generic Facilities (approved by State V.R. Authority for purchase of services) serving a variety of disabilities, a total of 129 useable responses; (3) Other Facilities (not used by V.R. Authorities for purchase of services) those agencies serving specific disability groups other than blindness and agencies dealing with essentially normal populations, a total of 82 usable responses. About 4% of clients evaluated in generic and other facilities were blind or visually impaired.

The major difference in evaluation provided to who are blind or visually impaired persons is largely in the adaptation of tests, work samples and equipment used during evaluation.

Training of evaluators should center on basic assessment skills; aptitudes, work habits, work skills, interests and work tolerance.

Any training in this area must deal with interpreting other reports (i.e., psychological, work history, medical and educational) and records and incorporating findings into evaluation planning and report writing.

Because situational assessment is considered to be the most important technique, a general model of situational assessment as well as training materials should have high priority.

Because most evaluators obtain information and input from a wide variety of sources during the evaluation period, they may need training in combining and interpreting data to include into a report.

A strong training program is needed in the area of adapting tests and other assessment devices for use with visually disabled persons.

Vocational Evaluation Profile:

Although evaluators pursue a similar number of goals, regardless of the facility setting, evaluators in Generic facilities are more likely to generally pursue the same set of goals with more of their clients. Evaluators in specialized settings are more likely to differentiate goals between persons served (i.e., greater individualization).

The most often pursued goals in evaluation were to determine: (1) aptitudes, (2) work habits, (3) work skills; (4) vocational interests and (5) work tolerance.

Evaluators in various settings use a similar variety of data collection devices; these typically include: (1) psychological reports, (2) work histories and (3) medical reports.

Evaluators in Blind and Generic facilities are more likely to use a consistent set of evaluation techniques, whereas, those working in Other agencies tend to apply their techniques more on an individual basis.

The most widely used techniques are: (1) situational assessment, (2) commercial work samples, (3) interview, (4) interest tests and (5) achievement tests. The least used method was job site evaluation.

Evaluators employed in agencies for the blind and visually impaired, as do evaluators in the Other and Generic facilities, report similar level of need for training; the five most important training needs were: (1) administration of intelligence tests, (2) interpretation of test results, (3) use of commercial work samples, (4) development of specialized work samples, and (5) systematic behavior observation.

Based on responses, the "typical" blind or visually impaired client had an additional disability with mental retardation, deafness, and emotional/mental illness being most frequently indicated. About 80% of the persons receiving vocational evaluations were between ages 13 and 40 years.

Based on survey information it is clear that vocational

evaluators currently provide services to a blind multiply handicapped population. Evaluation procedures developed for use with individuals who are only blind or visually impaired are not always appropriate for individuals who are also mentally retarded. Persons who are multiple handicapped often have more limited life experiences.

In addition to this population requiring a different evaluation procedure or style of administration based on cognitive abilities, their more limited life experiences require consideration during the evaluation process. Training can focus on developing a more interactive evaluation process using situational assessment and astute behavioral observations. The combination of sensory impairments with mental retardation can complicate an important component of the vocational evaluation, documentation of unique learning style. Evaluator training in documenting learning style is critical since recommendations for type of client training are developed for the I.W.R.P. based on this information.

Conclusion:

From the survey results indicating most blind persons receiving vocational evaluation services are multiply handicapped can we conclude: (a) persons who are only blind or visually impaired do not need vocational evaluation services; (b) they do not feel existing vocational evaluation services are appropriate to meet their needs; or (c) the survey sample is not representative? Since results indicate the ages of persons being evaluated is 13 to 40 years can we conclude that vocational evaluation tends

not to be a service provided for individuals over age 40 years?

In reflecting on the results presented as a result of this national survey it is critical to review the relationship between the purposes of vocational evaluation and the actual implementation of recommendations for the individual who is blind or visually impaired. While the primary purpose of the vocational evaluation should be client-oriented with information gathered used to make decisions relative to needed individualized services and interventions, the reality remains that much of the information gathered is agency-oriented and is used to make administrative decisions (Irving, Larry and Halpern, Andrew in Vocational Rehabilitation of Severely Handicapped Persons, editors-Bellamy, O'Connor, and Karen, University Park Press, Baltimore 1979.) The agency may reject or accept individuals for their service based on the evaluations. The information can be used for classification purposes to assign clients to existing agency programs or services. Likewise a comprehensive vocational evaluation can be the basis for making informed, appropriate decisions with individuals.

How do classification decisions relate to training decisions?
Are training decisions based on assessment of prior learning experience using static classification-type information?

If the purpose of the vocational evaluation is to assess the client's ability to learn and benefit from varied training opportunities, an interactive, dynamic evaluation approach

is essential. This involves structuring the evaluation so that accessible learning experiences are created with opportunities to observe various attributes and skills which have direct implications for methods of training. Irwin and Halpern (p.59) refer to this type of assessment procedures as learning potential format. Assessing for learning potential is by definition client-oriented and individualized-a priority to mandate.

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